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UNCLAS MANILA 005373

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MTS, G/TIP, INL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [PHUM](#) [ASEC](#) [KCRM](#) [RP](#)

SUBJECT: TRAINING PHILIPPINE POLICE ON TIP

REF: MANILA 3338

1. (U) Summary. In a Mission-sponsored workshop on Trafficking in Persons (TIP), participants from the Philippine National Police's (PNP) Women and Children's Concern Division (WCCD) learned about the seriousness of the global issue as well as application of key Philippine TIP legislation. Local media was extensive and largely favorable, despite a few skewed editorial comments linking TIP with an ongoing alleged rape case involving U.S. military personnel. The seminar represented a "quick win" for the PNP in current reform efforts, in which Mission is playing a crucial, ongoing role. End Summary.
2. (U) On November 7 and 8, 55 members of the PNP's WCCD successfully completed a Mission-sponsored TIP seminar. The workshop, jointly organized by Mission's Political Section and USAID, was financed by USAID's "Rule of Law Effectiveness" (ROLE) project to provide training in both global TIP issues and in the specific application of Republic Act 9208, the Philippines' anti-trafficking statute.
3. (U) The workshop represented a "quick win" for the PNP in current reform efforts, in which Mission is playing a crucial, ongoing role. In June and July, 2005, Mission hosted an INL-led assessment team that examined the PNP's strengths and weaknesses and recommended areas of reform. The team cited training gaps as a key area of focus, and singled out the WCCD as one of the "bright lights" of the PNP (reftel). In August, the PNP unveiled its own detailed Transformation Plan, which drew heavily from the US assessment as well as from a separate UNDP assessment, also completed this year. When the PNP Transformation Project called for early "quick win" projects to build momentum, Embassy immediately identified USAID's ROLE seminar as one such project.
4. (U) Reception of the seminar has been extremely positive. Seminar participants were enthusiastic about the course materials and instruction, as well as the opportunity to participate with fellow WCCD officers from around the country. Favorable press coverage of the event appeared in major media outlets throughout the week, including remarks by A/DCM at the closing ceremony. A few skewed editorials nonetheless tried to imply that the US has double standards by attacking TIP in the Philippines in the wake of an ongoing alleged rape case involving U.S. Marines.
5. (U) Comment. PNP's support for this workshop was a welcome indication of determination to do a better job against TIP and to assist TIP victims. Embassy will seek additional training opportunities, such as a planned workshop for corrections officials, to develop a series of "quick wins" that will reinforce and build momentum the PNP's Transformation efforts.

Jones